

A History of India

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In Two Books

BOOK

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Preface

India is a cradle of human civilisation. Its culture is closely linked with that of many other peoples and has exerted a significant influence upon their development. Despite centuries of this mutual enrichment India has maintained its original and striking individuality. The achievements of ancient and medieval India in science, literature and art over thousands of years have inspired the creative thought of nations far and wide. Hinduism and Buddhism, that originated in India, and other religious and philosophical teachings which evolved on this foundation, were to influence not merely the development of many Eastern civilisations, but also social thought in many other parts of the world.

Despite colonial oppression, which lasted for close on two hundred years, the people of India succeeded in upholding the traditions of their cultural heritage, distinguished in particular by the lofty ideals of humanism and a profound love of peace. In more recent times the culture and science of contemporary India have been developing on the basis of an original synthesis of Indian cultural traditions and the democratic principles of European culture.

The outstanding Indian writer, musician and teacher Rabindranath Tagore was and is held dear by the whole of the human race.

The history of India in the last several hundred years is that of a long and heroic struggle waged by several generations in the name of liberation from colonial and feudal oppression. The names of outstanding thinkers and politicians who headed the triumphant advance of the national revolution—Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru—stand out in the ranks of those who fought for India's freedom.

India's emergence as an independent nation in 1947 marked a new era in the history of its people. The country was then faced by a task of historic proportions: it had to overcome the survivals of its colonial past and choose a path leading into the future. The historical evolution of modern India is for the most part characterised by steady economic, social, political and cultural progress that is paving the way for profound change in the destiny of this great country.

Scientific analysis of the history and culture of India began at the end of the 18th century, when Europe once again "discovered" India. Since then a variety of schools and trends have grown up in Indology. Many works on India written by West European scholars are too Europe-orientated and various chapters of Indian history are approached in the same way as phenomena of European culture or ancient civilisations closer and more familiar to Europe.

In India itself great interest was shown in the study of the country's history and culture at the turn of the century, as the movement for national independence gained ground. Indian scholars made tremendous strides in the study of their country's history at this time, subjecting to scientific analysis many interesting works of literature and historical source materials. It was they who for the first time presented the history of modern India as the history of a struggle for independence.

An important contribution to this work was made by Russian Indologists. Prominent among them were I. Minayev, F. Shcherbatskoy, and S. Oldenburg, whose works constitute examples of outstanding scholarship. The Indologists of the Russian school have always shown deep respect for the cultural heritage of the peoples of India, and adopted an objective, strictly scientific approach to their study of the country's history and culture.

After the October Revolution of 1917 a Marxist school of Indology grew up: prominent scholars at the early stages included I. Reisner, V. Balabushevich, A. Dyakov, A. Osipov and N. Goldberg.

The interest shown in India grows from year to year in the Soviet Union. This can be accounted for both by the role which India played and continues to play in the world's historical development, and also by the broad political, economic and cultural ties which have grown up between the USSR and India. A deep affection for the peoples of India and a sense of international solidarity lead Soviet men and women to acquaint themselves in detail with India past and present. In the last ten years alone a large number of academic and general works on India's history and culture have appeared and many works by Indian writers have been translated into Russian.

Soviet historians compiled and published a four-volume *History of India* in 1959-1969 which was well received in the country concerned. This work, some of whose authors and editors have contributed to the present study as well, has been drawn on for this new *History of India* in two books. At the same time use has also been made of the latest research into Indian history carried out by scholars from both the Soviet Union and many other countries.

It is hoped that this book will provide the reader with a deeper knowledge of India and the history and culture of its peoples, and thus promote friendly relations between India and the Soviet Union.

The authors of this work are as follows: G. Bongard-Levin (Part I), K. Antonova (Part II and Part III as far as the section entitled "India during the Transition to Imperialism") and G. Kotovsky (the remainder of Part III and Part IV).

INDIA BETWEEN THE SIXTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

Indian Feudalism

Most Soviet Indologists regard the period from the seventh to the eighteenth century as the age of Indian history dominated by feudalism. This assertion is questioned by a number of scholars in view of the fact that the socio-economic order of medieval India differed from that of medieval Europe, that had originally come to be known as feudalism. In India the hierarchical structure of the ruling class was weakly developed, and at certain periods was lacking altogether. Landowners, as a rule, did not run their estates. Unpaid forced labour (*begar*) was used for the most part only for the construction of fortresses, irrigation systems, etc. Rent was usually exacted from the peasants in the form of a fixed state tax.

Rulers granted their subjects conditional ownership of the land, i.e., only the revenue from the land not the land itself. They expected in return a specific amount of state taxes. Those who were given land on the basis of conditional ownership collected taxes-cum-rent using them for their own purposes, but were obliged to maintain a specified number of troops, which taken together constituted the ruler's army. Usually neither land grants nor titles were inherited. There was also no serfdom in India, i.e., the peasant did not depend judicially on the feudal landowner. Landowners administered justice and meted out punishment only in connection with the collection of taxes. Instead of social estate barriers there existed caste barriers. The absence of inherited land holdings, titles and social estates at certain periods in Indian history made it easier for capable men of humble station to rise up in the world as military commanders.

One of the specific factors distinguishing the Indian form of feudalism from the European variety was the predominance of state-owned land.

Yet at the same time there were important resemblances between the social orders of medieval Europe and India. In both the economy was based on the manual labour of small peasants and artisans, who owned their implements of production and who secured their livelihood via production at subsistence level. Society was based on the exploitation of these groups by means of the collection of rent (or tax-cum-rent), mainly by means of coercion that was not economic in

character. This explains why the term feudalism is used with reference to India although it must be emphasised that certain of its features were quite distinct from the European model.

One of the questions discussed in detail by Soviet historians is the state ownership of land in India. The state ownership of land had not been defined in any Indian juridical sources, but the rent exacted from the land took the form of a state tax. In medieval India, it should be remembered, the word *land* was used to denote two quite different things. For the cultivator it meant a specific field which he worked, and rights over which he retained, even if he did not make use of it for a considerable period; it was land that he could bequeath, sell or donate as long as certain traditional rules of village communities were observed. For such a piece of land he was obliged to pay the fixed tax-cum-rent to the state or to whatever person a ruler might transfer his right to collect taxes.

For the feudal lord on the other hand, or for the feudal state, *land* meant territory from whose inhabitants a set amount of taxes were to be collected. The ruler granted conditionally only some territory from which a certain amount of taxes was to be collected; later the officials decided what district or districts should be comprised within this grant. In the stage of developed feudalism the vast majority of these estates were conditional: they could not be bequeathed, alienated or sublet to less wealthy landowners. The feudal lords did not intervene with the way in which the peasant worked the land. However since taxes were only exacted from cultivated land, the feudal lords would go out of their way to extend the area of land under the plough, laying down that peasants should enjoy tax privileges for a number of years, if they brought fallow or virgin land under cultivation, or by rewarding those who sowed intensive, high-yield crops.

State ownership of land meant that the state fixed the amount of land revenue and the manner of its collection. This land tax was of the same size and character as the feudal rent; the land tax was either collected by state officials in person or this right was given to the feudal lords themselves. As a result various social groups in medieval India had their own distinctive concept of land and rights to landed property. It should however be borne in mind that while state ownership was the predominant form, there was also another smaller portion of landed property belonging to hereditary independent or vassal landowners (they came to be known as the *zamindars* under the Moguls), who themselves laid down the size of the rents they would demand from their cultivators and at times supervised their own farms with the help of their dependent cultivators or farm servants.

The basic unit of the agricultural labour force was the family. References are made to the existence of village communities with village councils composed of their most prominent members. In Northern India these communities seem to have incorporated one or

several villages linked together by some degree of common kinship with the founder of the settlement in question or with the tribe of conquerors that had settled in the area. In Southern India until the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries these communities were large, consisting of tens, hundreds or even thousands of villages, and although in the ninth and tenth centuries that kind of big community ceased to be an integrated economic unit, it still remained an important political force. In some of the communities land was redistributed at periodic intervals, while in others the land under cultivation was divided between families on a permanent basis. It would seem that the village community as a whole had control of the fallow land, assigned to individual members their share of the land revenue, and probably supported a certain number of servants and artisans. It is probable that the village communities in Southern India were more prosperous and powerful than those in the north of the country. At any rate their decisions and instructions were more frequently recorded on stone and other durable materials. In all Indian communities the more prominent individuals (usually the headman and the scribe) occupied a privileged position. Important decisions seem to have been taken at village councils, but gradually more and more power within the community came to be concentrated in the hands of the head of the village and the scribe. The upper strata of the village community often actually turned into petty feudal lords and their land was worked by those dependent upon them.

Early Feudal Period

In ancient times certain features of feudal exploitation were already to be found in India: on the one hand land was mostly cultivated not by slaves but by bond labourers, while grants of land were received in return for "services to the state" on the other. In the sixth and seventh centuries there was a marked increase in the number of small copper plates used to record such grants of land. They enable the historian to trace the development of feudal relations. These copper plates list the ever increasing number of taxes collected from the population: the grantees were either exempt from their payment or were entitled to collect them for their own use. More and more frequently there appears the formula of immunity—prohibiting *chata* and *bhata* (evidently, officials and military detachments) from entering granted lands. Feudal landowners became entitled to administer justice, and the peasants started to become increasingly dependent on their masters. Frequently the grand feudal lords, who to judge by their titles acted as local governors, gave away parts of their lands in grants "for services rendered" without seeking the sanction of their ruler. Sometimes grants of land were made in the name of the ruler, but "at the request" of the less powerful feudal lord.

As regards social and political developments, India did not undergo such major upheavals as did Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Foreign trade with the Mediterranean countries gradually decreased, but Indian wares were still exported on a wide scale to Eastern countries from Egypt to China. India exported in the main cotton fabrics and other articles made by her craftsmen, as well as spices, ivory, precious stones and valuable sorts of timber. Imports included silk, gold, luxury articles, certain types of fabric differing in ornament and colours from Indian materials, and also horses that were imported in large numbers since the Indian climate and vegetation were ill-suited for horse breeding.

From the first century A.D. onwards settlements of Indian merchants appeared in many countries of the Far East, in particular in what are now Malaya, Indonesia and Indochina. There were many sea-port towns along the entire coast of India: Bharukachchha (modern Broach), Suratha (modern Surat), Shurparaka (modern Sopara), Urayur, Madurai, Kanchipuram, etc. There were also large towns on the main caravan routes: Takshashila, Shakala (Sialkot), Purushapura (Peshawar)—in the Punjab Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Sthanesh-vara (Thaneswar) in Northern India; Ujjain in Central India; Vatapi, Tagara, Paithan, to name but three, in Southern India. These towns were large trading and manufacturing centres, although many of their inhabitants were engaged in agriculture; they kept herds and worked fields within the confines of the towns. The merchants organised influential guilds, which played a prominent role in the economic, and to a lesser extent, political life of the country. To judge by the source materials available, the merchants were more wealthy and influential than artisans, often acquired land by purchase and made rich gifts to the temples. In short, urban life did not fall into decline during the early medieval period.

Neither did internal trade decrease during this period. The most convenient trade artery within India was provided by the Ganges and its tributaries. Trade articles were taken south from Bengal on coastal trading vessels, or by trading caravans.

There were also trade routes across the Deccan, for the most part along large rivers; this facilitated transportation of merchandise from the large ports into the interior. However trade within the country was not as well developed as foreign trade.

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF INDIA FROM THE SIXTH TO THE TWELFTH CENTURY

As a result of her uninterrupted trade links and the growth of her ports, the various regions of India did not become isolated from one another as was the case in Europe at the beginning of the Middle Ages: nor did India experience such a cultural decline at this period.

However in India as well the consolidation of feudal relations impeded the existence of large state unions. Instead the picture was one of rivalry and fierce strife between petty feudal rulers leading to political fragmentation. In this situation the Gupta empire later came to be upheld as the "golden age of India".

That empire which had started to weaken at the end of the fifth century, finally collapsed after numerous invasions by the Hun tribes, although in Magadha itself the Gupta dynasty remained in power until the end of the seventh century. As late as 510 A.D. the Hun king Toramana was defeated by Bhanu Gupta, the last Gupta ruler about whom reliable information is available. However already in about 530 A.D. the Huns under Mihirakula were ruling over not only North-Western India but also Malwa and the Yamuna-Ganges valley as far as present-day Gwalior. Mihirakula appears to have been an extremely cruel conqueror. The Indian rulers of the North succeeded in joining forces and dealing him a major defeat in about 533 A.D.

The tribes that came to India during the Hun invasion and settled there made a deep imprint upon the country's history. Some of these settled and intermixed with the inhabitants of North-Western India. Together with these tribes there also came the Gurjaras, who settled in the Punjab, Sind, and Rajputana: some of them later penetrated Malwa and that part of the country which came to be known after them—Gujarat. Close contacts and intermarriage between both the Huns and the Gurjaras and the local population gave rise to the ethnic group which later came to be known as the Rajputs. (The term Rajput has several meanings: it is used to designate a people, various tribes and a caste.)

As early as the seventh century, feudal relations started to take root in this part of the country. In the eighth century the Rajputs penetrated the rich areas of the Ganges valley and Central India. For many centuries of Indian history the Rajputs constituted a close-knit ethnic group. The feudal relations which took root in their territories differed in certain respects from those found elsewhere. The feudal hierarchy was more intricate and traditions of vassalage more deep-rooted.

The largest states in Northern India at the end of the sixth century were Gauda (North and West Bengal), the state of the Maukharis (the Doab and the middle reaches of the Ganges) with its capital in Kanauj, and that of the Pushyabhutis (the upper Doab, the region around present-day Delhi and Sirhind with its capital at Sthaneshvara). These three states were involved in constant feuds with one another. First Shashanka (who reigned from the end of the sixth century to the third decade of the seventh), the ruler of Gauda, conquered Magadha and all the territories to the west as far as Prayaga, and to the east he annexed lands (that form the modern state of Orissa) stretching as far as the Mahendragiri Mountains. He also formed an alliance with the ruler of Malwa against the Maukharis. The latter gained the support of

the ruler of the Pushyabhutis, but were defeated in battle. Harshavardhana, or Harsha, the younger brother of the Pushyabhuti ruler, came to the throne.

According to tradition, Harsha had mustered an impressive army consisting of twenty thousand horsemen, fifty thousand foot soldiers and five thousand elephants. In the course of six years, when according to the chronicler Bana, "while the elephants were not unharnessed nor the soldiers unhelmeted", Harsha succeeded in conquering virtually the whole of Northern India. His attempt to invade the Deccan, however, seems to have ended in defeat on the banks of the river Narmada at the hands of Pulakeshin II, the ruler of the Western Chalukyas. Yet Pulakeshin made no further attempts to march northwards. After Shashanka's death Harsha seized Magadha and Bengal. He devoted the latter years of his life to improving the administration and economy of the conquered territories.

Harsha's kingdom was the last state incorporating a major part of the sub-continent in a large empire until the beginning of the thirteenth century. However the links between the various parts of the empire were weaker than at the time of the Guptas. Only a small part of the empire was directly subordinated to the centre, the majority of it was administered by vassal princes, who enjoyed considerable power in relation to questions of internal politics. Furthermore, the borders of the empire did not extend beyond Northern India and parts of Malwa and Rajputana remained independent.

Harsha's exploits were preserved for posterity thanks mainly to the panegyric chronicle *Harshacharita* written by Bana, and also the account written by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hsuan Tsang, who visited his realm. According to Bana, the land tax in Harsha's domains was one-sixth of the harvest. A number of other internal tariffs and market dues also helped to swell the state coffers.

Although Harsha's ancestors had been Shaivites, Harsha himself became a Buddhist. He devoted considerable energy and resources to the construction of Buddhist monasteries. During his reign the large Buddhist monastery-university at Nalanda (near modern Patna), where thousands of students were maintained and given instruction, won a reputation that spread far beyond the borders of India. The buildings at Nalanda counted many storeys, the academic and living premises taken together covered an enormous territory. However the influence of Buddhism at that time was clearly on the wane and the Brahman divinities Shiva, Vishnu and Surya (the Sun-god) commanded more popularity.

Harsha's empire existed for close on thirty years. After his death the empire disintegrated and for several centuries afterwards India consisted of a large number of states; some of these were large but none of them incorporated a major part of the sub-continent as had been the case with the Mauryan and Gupta empires. These states were continually warring with one another, concluding alliances of short

duration before embarking on hostilities once more. The kaleidoscopic, constantly changing picture provided by the events of this time is extremely difficult to describe. It is best to dwell briefly on just the best known names and events.

In Southern India the main states that were continually warring with each other were those of the Chalukyas (from Vatapi), who came into prominence after their ruler Pulakeshin II secured victories over Harsha, the Pallavas and the Pandyas. Pulakeshin assumed the title of emperor, and his brothers who were ruling in Gujarat and the Eastern Deccan recognised his suzerainty. However, the Chalukyas were then attacked by the Pallavas (whose capital was at Kanchipuram) and the Pandyas (with their centre in Madura). The Pandyas were able gradually to set up a large sea fleet and this enabled them at times even to gain control over Ceylon. In 640 A.D. the Pallavas dealt the Chalukyas a crushing defeat and Pulakeshin II was killed while his capital was under siege. However Pulakeshin's successors retained intact the larger part of his realm and on several occasions marched southwards and succeeded in annexing new territories.

The Pallavas exerted a considerable influence on the culture of India: in Mahabalipuram, on the coast, a large number of temples were cut out of the rock and the style of architecture used there incorporating groups of sculptured figures and bas-reliefs over almost the whole of the sacred building was later to spread right across the Deccan. It also left its mark on artistic styles in South-East Asia, since the Pallava state engaged in overseas trade on a wide scale; in what are now Indonesia and Cambodia there were at that time large settlements of traders from Southern India. The state of the Western Chalukyas continued to exist up until the middle of the eighth century, when the ruler of the Chalukyas, Kirtivarman II was defeated by the Rashtrakutas from Maharashtra. Then for almost two centuries the Rashtrakutas dominated the Deccan. They left a lasting monument to their rule in the famous Kailasa temple hewn out of the rock at Ellora (not far from modern Aurangabad).

During their heyday the Rashtrakutas made several incursions into Northern India. The main opponents they encountered were the Palas from Bihar and Bengal, and the Gurjara-Pratiharas, whose capital was in Kanauj. The conflict between these three states raged mainly over the fertile Doab valley, where the Ganges and the Yamuna flow. In the north of India at that time there were also several petty princedoms such as those of the Chandellas, who built the world-famous temples at Khajuraho, and the Tomaras, who set up their capital at Dhillika (modern Delhi).

In the tenth century all three of these powers in Northern India were in decline. The smaller vassal princedoms were growing in strength, expanding their territory and gradually ousting their former rulers. In the lands of the Gurjara-Pratiharas for example there emerged independent states of the Paramaras, Chandellas, Guhilas,

Chauhans (Chahamanas) and Chalukyas (Solanki). The realm of the Palas broke up into a number of small territories, the most powerful among which was the Sena principedom. The Chauhans (or Chahamanas) ruled in Eastern and Central Rajasthan and part of Gujarat; the Paramaras, who made several incursions into Rajasthan, Gujarat and the Deccan, were based in Malwa. However by the middle of the eleventh century the Paramara state had weakened. Bundelkhand became the centre of the Chandella state, but its possessions also included part of the Doab, Varanasi and a small part of Bihar. In Central India the principedom of the Kalachuris (Haihayas), which had previously been a vassal province of the Rashtrakutas, now became independent, and continued its independent existence until the thirteenth century. The dynasty of the Chalukyas (Solanki) became firmly established in Northern Gujarat.

Hostilities between the Pallavas and the Pandyas undermined the power of both states. The Tamil dynasty of the Cholas, which ruled over a small region around Uraiyur, came to the forefront. In the battle of the year 893 A.D. the Cholas inflicted a decisive defeat on the Pallavas, then in 915 they routed the Pandyas and were able to unite under their rule almost the whole of what is now known as the Tamil-nad. Their battles against the Cholas and the constant efforts required to maintain their domination of Northern India weakened the Rashtrakutas and in 973 they were overthrown by Taila II, who set up the state of the Later Chalukyas. The fall of the mighty Rashtrakuta dynasty enabled the Cholas to dominate Southern India for the next two hundred years. The Cholas were in the ascendant in the eleventh century. During the reign of Rajaraja I (985-1015) and Rajendra I (1015-1044) the Cholas were engaged in prolonged hostilities with the Eastern Chalukyas from Vengi, whom they finally reduced to vassal status but were unable in the end to completely subjugate. However the Cholas did, on the other hand, seize Ceylon, where they were able to establish themselves firmly and for a long period. Indeed, part of the present-day population of Sri Lanka is Tamil in origin. The Cholas were engaged in war with the state of the Shrivijayas, the centre of which was in Sumatra and which also controlled part of Java and the Malacca peninsula. In 1025 the Cholas seized part of the territory of the Shrivijayas, only to be driven out from them later on. In India itself the Cholas' state embraced the territory of modern Mysore and Kerala. The Cholas inflicted several defeats on the Chalukyas from Kalyani and undertook a lengthy campaign in Orissa and Bengal during which, legends have it, they penetrated as far as the Ganges.

Possessed, as they were, of a powerful army and well-equipped fleet and thanks to their trade links with the Shrivijayas and the countries bordering on the Arabian Sea, the Cholas prospered and became extremely rich. They built magnificent temples (such as the one at Chidambaram). Numerous bronze statuettes of the gods were fashioned. In the year 1070 the Chola dynasty and that of the Eastern

Chalukyas from Vengi united. By the beginning of the twelfth century the Chola state incorporated almost the whole of Southern India, south of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers, and it stretched eastwards as far as the Godavari River. However the process of feudalisation eventually brought about the disintegration of the Chola empire. Independent princedoms emerged in the borderlands of that state, which, although officially under Chola jurisdiction, nevertheless completely ignored the central government and waged war and concluded treaties among themselves at will. Gradually in Southern India there came into prominence such peoples as the Hoyasalas from Dwarasamudra, the Yadavas from Devagiri, the Kakatiyas from Warangal and the Pandyas who had seized power in the southern part of the Tamil-nad. At the end of the twelfth century the Cholas were only in control of an insignificant princedom in the Tanjore area.

The Yadavas achieved their greatest glory during the reign of Singhana (1200-1247). Their state embraced all the Deccan between the Krishna and the Nerbada rivers.

Northern India was plagued by still greater fragmentation; here fierce strife raged between the states of the Chauhans (whose capital was in Ajmer and at times in Delhi) and the Gahadavalas (incorporating modern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar). However these states later were not able to withstand attacks by the armies from Khurasan. In the twelfth century there remained but one sizeable state in Northern India, that of the Senas in Bengal.

From the eleventh century India began to be subjected to incursions by Moslems from the north. At the close of the twelfth century they began to annex large Indian territories; this gave rise to a completely new situation in India.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEUDAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SIXTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

While a kaleidoscopic series of states and rulers appeared on the political stage, and as wars were being waged, a long and gradual process of feudalisation was at work in the socio-economic life of Indian society. It was proceeding at two levels. On the one hand more and more lands that brought in rent were being distributed as grants. The grantees came to enjoy more and more rights both in relation to the central government, and also in relation to the inhabitants dependent on them. On the other hand within the village community itself the village officials, particularly the headman, frequently gained greater powers among the villagers; their functions with regard to the division of the land tax within their village acquired increased importance. This meant that whereas before their main concern had

been to protect the interests of the village community, now all-important became their role as rural administrators belonging to the state apparatus. Through their control of important community affairs and the way the village's uncultivated land was used, through their acquisition of land for themselves and the use they made of the free services of other villagers, some of the headmen gradually became in fact petty feudal landowners; the status they had acquired in practical terms would later be legalised through government decrees. However this emergence of new feudal landowners from the ranks of the cultivators is outlined in only the scantiest terms in historical documents.

The majority of inscriptions dating from this period (the sixth to the twelfth century) record land grants made to Brahmins in order to enhance the religious merit of the ruler. These were grants "in perpetuity" and they were recorded on durable materials, usually copper plates. However the few grants that were made to secular citizens and were recorded not on perishable palm leaves (the customary material for writing in Southern India) but in copper resemble the grants made to Brahmins, although it is possible that there also existed assignments for terms of service.

As a rule, and in particular in Bengal, these grants were made by the feudal rulers. However, in Northern India, in the empire of the Gurjara-Pratiharas, such grants were often made by vassals whose possessions were situated in the borderlands, either with the agreement of the central organs of administration or even without their knowledge at all. These gifts became particularly frequent after the decline of large states in the tenth century.

The titles of various men of power listed in inscriptions—those of sovereigns, regional and district governors, etc.—point to the existence of a developed feudal administration network, especially in Bengal. In the north there were considerably fewer administrative posts: it would appear that the vassals enjoyed more independence there.

Those who were granted or given land came gradually to acquire administrative and judicial immunity. They were entitled to judge the people inhabiting their lands in connection with the "ten offences" recognised by the courts of the time; often state officials were prohibited from entering the territory of such estates. This meant that the cultivators became more dependent on the grantees. The state usually reserved for itself the right to administer justice only in cases of major offences, subject to capital punishment. On occasions, and in particular from the twelfth century onwards, the owners of feudal estates were themselves in charge of the distribution of village community rental.

In the inscriptions of the times there are also references to taxes from which grantees were exempted. Gradually the list of taxes grew and grew, in particular by the tenth century. Among the taxes listed

are those on marriages, childlessness, on the celebration of festivals or family occasions in the house of the landowner; also mentioned are collections to be paid for the delivery of royal decrees, or the board and lodging of officials visiting the village, fines decreed by the courts, tariffs, etc. Numerous attempts were made to "put in order" this complicated state of affairs, i.e., to combine these requisitions in one basic tax. Sooner or later however new taxes were added and the situation would repeat itself. This reflected the growing financial oppression to which the people were being subjected and the increasingly dependent position of the villagers. Oppressed by heavy land revenue demands the village community members were in practical terms losing their personal freedom.

As the degree of taxation increased so too did the varieties of forced labour, which constituted a type of *corvée*. It was the duty of the peasants to see to the maintenance and upkeep of bridges and roads, attend to the needs of officials who might visit their village, and take part in various types of building work. It is not however known whether or not they were required to work on the field of the owner of the granted land. All that is mentioned in the inscriptions is that the holder of such land is entitled to "cultivate the land or have it cultivated", but it is not clear whether this implied *corvée* or the introduction of share-cropping. There is however no doubt that the use of villagers' forced labour was widespread.

The richest of the feudal lords (with the exception of actual rulers) were of course the "collective owners": the Hindu temples and the monasteries. At that period there was a difference between the grants made to religious institutions and those made to priests and monks, when lands, villages or parts of villages could be donated both to individual Brahmins or groups of Brahmins, who would then share out the rents between themselves. All questions relating to the administration of such Brahmin villages were resolved by the council of Brahmins or the *sabha*. This council also decided questions connected with the allocation of rents, usually on a once-and-for-all basis.

The Brahmin *sabha* differed from the village community in that it was a council consisting of landowners only, although occasionally land grants to Brahmins were divided up so many times amongst descendants that the individual plots were no longer distinguishable in size from those of the villagers. The temples did not divide up their possessions; on the contrary they added to them, receiving all manner of donations from pious rulers, feudal lords and village communities, as well as through land purchases and mortgages, etc. Lands donated to temples were, as a rule, exempt from taxation and enjoyed various forms of immunity.

Initially, to judge by existing inscriptions, only uncultivated lands were donated. In order to donate land to a temple a ruler or feudal lord was obliged first of all to buy it, as temple land had to be free of

revenue obligations. In medieval India land, in particular that which had not yet been cultivated, was often bought and sold, although in each case it was necessary to obtain the sanction of the village community or any other group to which it belonged. After the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries restrictions pertaining to the purchase and sale of land were increased. It is possible that on the granted fallow land temples set up their own estates, using the labour of monks, and also that of slaves, share-croppers and hired labourers. From the sixth-eighth centuries onwards it became common practice for temples to receive donations of whole villages, whose inhabitants worked the land for the priests or monks. It is known for a fact that in the seventh and eighth centuries the temples collected rent in kind. Apart from food products the cultivators were obliged to supply the temples with all essentials for the observance of religious ceremonies such as oil, incense, garlands of flowers, cloth for ceremonial garments.

The temple estates were usually managed by a council consisting of Brahmans and headmen of other cultivators' or merchant and artisan castes. There was a large body of staff at the temple including scribes, craftsmen, singers, musicians, dancers, etc. The temple estates in Southern India were particularly extensive and well organised.

Although lands were donated to temples "for as long as the Sun and Moon exist" and in the inscriptions a curse was laid on those who might encroach upon that land, it is clear from historical records that on frequent occasions, particularly in troubled times, as one dynasty would be ousted by another or when the local population might be subjected to invasion by foreign conquerors, not only the estates of feudal lords but also those belonging to Brahman communities and temples were confiscated by the state. This explains the constant changes at that period between the proportion of land owned by the state and that owned by individual feudal lords.

However, despite all this, the members of village communities in India maintained their rights not only to personal freedom but also certain other rights and privileges. Grants of land (and this applied particularly to Bengal) were made in the presence of the whole of the local population, including even those from the most humble castes. In the texts of the relevant grants special mention was made of the *mahattaras*, i.e., the "respected members" of the community, who appear to have included the headmen and scribes.

In a grant from Southern Maharashtra there is reference to a plot of land exempt from taxation that belonged to the village headman. The headmen, as is clear from literary works written in the Middle Ages, often used their power to extort bribes, demanding from fellow-villagers respect and gifts; they were considerably richer than the other members of the village community and their influence often extended beyond the confines of the village circle. One of the dynasties, the Rashtrakutas, was descended, to judge by the name,

from precisely this stratum of the villagers. On assuming power, the Rashtrakutas made their title based on position in the village community ("rural elite") into the name of a dynasty, showing no sign of shame at their rural origins.

In the Middle Ages the village community was a powerful organisation which had not only a social and economic role to play but also a political one, particularly in Southern India. In the north the village communities appear to have been smaller in size and less influential, but there too the communities often incorporated a number of villages (*gramas*) or smaller units (*konas*, *pattakas*, etc.). Each village community had a council consisting of "prominent members", was in charge of the land and resolved all local disputes and lawsuits. In Southern India the village community could embrace the territory of a whole district (or *nadu*). In Carnatic geographical names followed by a number were used to denote large village communities, such as Belvola 300 or Chirapi 12. Scholars do not yet agree what these numbers might signify, but most probably they indicate the number of farms incorporated within a given community's organisation, or the number of local village councils it embraced.

These communities arranged their own administration and defence, mutual assistance amongst the peasants, building of irrigation facilities and participated in the hostilities between the local feudal lords. They inscribed their decrees on stone plates that were frequently enclosed within the walls of temples. Money for this activity was collected in the form of community dues, which sometimes were no less in amount than revenue taxes. Gradually, as the process of feudalisation progressed, these large communities began to lose their autonomy and develop into ordinary administrative units, which came gradually under the control of officials appointed by the central authorities. The final disintegration of the large village communities into small units embracing no more than one or two villages would appear to have taken place in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

In these village communities of medieval India the lands under cultivation were divided between the peasants. In documents relating to Southern India references are to be found, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onwards, to redivision of land designed to distribute more fairly among the peasants the more fertile plots and those situated on more convenient terrain. However, these redivisions were by no means the rule and they did not affect the peasant's right of ownership to his share of the village community land, which he could also alienate. A member of the village community was a landowner and could dispose of his fields: he could bequeath them and was also entitled to sell or purchase land, although the alienation of land from the village community could only take place under the latter's control. Fallow lands belonged to the community as a whole and they were not subject to land tax. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries rural

craftsmen were set apart from the mass of the rural population and maintained by the community. Until that period there was simply no mention of the composition of the village community in documentary material. Since changes within the village community did not affect its position as a revenue-paying territory, the feudal lords did not interfere in village life and affairs.

In medieval India there existed, as it were, three worlds and three different ways of life: the first was the entourage of the feudal lord or the temple, the second was the village community and the third was the town.

Right up until the end of the thirteenth and even during the fourteenth century the towns, and particularly the seaport towns of Southern India, enjoyed far-reaching autonomy. The affairs of these towns were controlled by town assemblies, whose members included the heads of the richer and more influential castes, usually those of the traders and less frequently those of the craftsmen (such as the copper workers and oil-pressers). The town assembly not only concerned itself with the maintenance of law and order and gave judgement in cases of litigation, but it also collected trading dues and taxes from the artisans, and independently decided the amount of these dues or taxes. The town administration could, on its own initiative, make grants to the temples for religious ceremonies and for charitable purposes not only from the income it received, thanks to the collection of trading dues, or taxes on houses of artisans, but also donate plots of land belonging to the town that were not, to use the words of contemporary inscriptions, "used for building sites". The town assemblies were inter-caste organisations. To a large extent they were autonomous.

At the same time there also existed merchant guilds that embraced a whole trading area. An example of these is provided by the merchant guild in Aihole, whose influence spread to many areas of Southern India, to the trading centres of Indian merchants in South-East Asia, although the nucleus of the guild—its council of five hundred *swami*—was in the town of Aihole in Southern India. Another similar organisation was the *manigramam* with its centre in present-day Kerala. Its sphere of influence embraced not only India, but also Egypt, Arabia and South-East Asia. Members of the *komati* merchant guild that was centred in Penugonda constituted the major part of the assemblies in eighteen towns. There also existed other similar organisations.

It would be wrong to assume that the Indian towns of that period were the embryo of new, capitalist relations. The broad autonomy of the towns served to indicate the fact that the feudal lords were as yet unable to assert their control over the economy and social life of the country. References can be found to the presence in the towns of representatives of the state administration, who in certain cases took the final decisions. Gradually, as the power of the feudal state

developed, the towns lost their autonomy. Revenues were collected by state officials, who also fixed their amount. Revenues from petty shops and artisan districts in towns were donated to feudal lords. The town assemblies ceased to exist, and the merchant guilds lost their political influence. So that finally, after the late thirteenth and the early fourteenth century, rulers began to grant whole towns to feudal lords. From the fourteenth century onwards, town self-administration had, for all intents and purposes, ceased to exist. The feudal lords became autocrats in the towns to the same extent as they had been in the villages. From then on the merchants, despite their wealth, were dependent upon the arbitrary whims of the feudal lords: they were harassed and sometimes even imprisoned if they did not provide the large sums of money which one or another potentate might require.

The social organisation of Indian society at that time was based on the caste system. The classification of society as consisting of four *varnas* (or social estates) had been retained since ancient times. Each *varna* was subdivided into a large number of different castes. The majority of merchant and artisan castes had come into being as a result of the division of labour, while certain others could be traced back to the movement of various groups to new localities, where their customs and beliefs had set them apart from the majority of the local population. A number of castes were essentially distinct tribes that had been incorporated into the caste system with traditional occupations and social functions. Each of the castes was seen as possessing a specific degree of "purity" or "impurity" and a specific position in relation to other castes within the complex hierarchy.

The implications intrinsic to the terms denoting the various *varnas* had also changed. The Brahmins were not only priests: more and more of their number had become landowners, officials and military commanders. In Northern India the Rajputs now started to lay claim to the title *kshatriya*. Their traditional occupation was now not only warfare but farming as well, although it was held that it was beneath the dignity of a Rajput to hold a plough, and the tilling of the land would be delegated to their servants and dependents. In Southern India *kshatriya* castes had practically not evolved. Representatives of the warrior and farming castes were regarded as *shudras* there. The actual status of this *varna* was enhanced: *shudras* became full-fledged members of the village communities and in the early centuries A.D. this also applied to certain sections of the artisans. Merchants and rich artisans began to claim *vaishya* status.

The caste system generally corresponded to the class divisions in society and served to sanctify it. Influential and rich groups occupied the highest echelons of the caste hierarchy, while the lowest socio-economic groups of the population belonged to the lower castes. At the same time, if certain individuals or families achieved higher social status—became, for instance, big landowners, successful military commanders or even rulers, then high caste origin, from

kshatriya or equally elevated castes, would be ascribed to them, or at least to their descendants. Whole groups of *shudras* engaged in trading eventually achieved *vaishya* status. Even the untouchables were able sometimes to raise themselves up to *shudra* status, or at least lay claim to higher caste origins. At the same time it was also possible to descend the caste ladder.

This meant that the caste system facilitated above all the preservation of the existing social system, but in cases of change was also able to adapt itself to new circumstances. At that period the caste structure was not the ossified institution it was to become later.

INDIAN CULTURE BETWEEN THE SIXTH AND TWELFTH CENTURIES

In the Middle Ages man's world outlook manifested itself in his religious beliefs. In India religion played a very important role. The period in question was marked by a decline of Buddhism and the onset of an age predominated by Hinduism. Scholars fail to agree as to the reasons behind this phenomenon. Some hold that Buddhism in India was linked with the domination of the *kshatriyas*, who stood at the head of large empires. Others consider that Buddhism, given its widely ramified system of monasteries and pilgrims, was not in a position to adapt itself to the more enclosed economic structure of the early medieval period. At any rate the last resurgence of Buddhism in the form of the Mahayana teaching took place in Harsha's empire, when the university at Nalanda attracted thousands of students from various Buddhist countries. Buddhism was also championed by the Pala dynasty in Bengal. A considerable section of the population there adhered to Buddhist beliefs as late as the twelfth century. In the south of India the decline of Buddhism was remarked upon as early as the eighth century.

This change in religion did not lead to a different mode of life. In Hinduism there is a large number of sects and trends, which differ as regards both the god selected from the extensive Hindu pantheon that the faithful might venerate, as well as the religious rites and customs observed. However certain customs and ideas are common to all Hindus. They attach great importance to the concept of virtue or duty (*Dharma*), that consists in the steadfast and unswerving execution of caste obligations. Thus for the higher castes *Dharma* involves just administration or courageous behaviour on the battlefield, and for the lower ones conscientious execution of their traditional occupation and respect to be shown to persons of elevated origin. Hinduism instils the idea that the division of society into castes has been predestined, that all castes are essential and that the position of each individual in the caste structure has been determined by his behaviour in the life that preceded his current one. Man's soul does not die but after the death of his body it transmigrates to another being: if a man has led a

virtuous life, then after his rebirth his caste status will have been enhanced. If on the other hand he has led a corrupt life, then he might be reborn as an untouchable or even as some loathsome animal. Hence everything appears just, for even if a good man suffers all kinds of misfortune, this is seen as punishment for misdemeanours in a past existence.

Common to all Hindus was the concept of *ahimsa*, namely the idea that one should avoid inflicting harm on any living creature, and also the homage paid to a number of animals—in particular the cow that is worshipped by all Hindus. The rituals performed at various occasions through man's life, from the cradle to the grave, were also a shared tradition even though the details of these rituals might vary. All Hindus had to make sacrifices—some, animal sacrifices but mostly just offerings of flowers and incense; all were called upon to make offerings within their particular means to the Brahmans and the temples, and all revered as holy men various hermits, ascetics, wandering preachers, etc. All Hindus also viewed as obligatory the performance of caste rituals and the observance of caste prohibitions, indeed these were seen as no less important than the worship of the divinities.

The most popular objects of worship were the gods Vishnu and Shiva. Linked with the cult of Shiva is the worship of his spouse, known in various parts of the country as Kali, Uma, Parvati, Shakti. Kali was represented as a fierce goddess demanding bloody sacrifices, while Uma and Parvati were seen as a tender mother. It is clear that the traditions of many different cults were drawn together and fused in this image.

The worship of Shakti evolved. Shakti was also perceived of as the emanation of the might of Shiva and the veneration of Shakti was associated with Tantrism—a Hindu movement that was quite separate from the other currents, and which had its own sacred writings, the *Tantras*, and with its own ways of worshipping a deity, mostly a female one. The emphasis in Tantrism is on elements of mysticism and magic, and also on rites and conduct that are prohibited by Hinduism (orgies, marriage beyond the confines of one's caste, etc.). At that period Tantrism was advocated for the most part by members of the lower castes and representatives of non-Aryan tribes and groups.

From the sixth century onwards the idea of *Bhakti* became widespread in Southern India: this concept implied an overwhelming love of god before which ritual, asceticism and Brahman orthodoxy pale in significance. In the twelfth century, Basava, the founder of the Lingayata sect (which worshipped in particular Shiva's symbol, the linga, i.e., phallus), linked together the concept of *Bhakti* with Tantrism, and repudiated such an essential principle of Hinduism as the caste system. He emphasised not so much observance of ritual as the need to love Shiva, while at the same time accepting the merit of

asceticism. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Lingayata followers of Basava openly opposed official Hinduism and Jainism.

Between the seventh and ninth centuries the Vaishnavites also came under the influence of this new concept, and later it was propagated by the Bhaktas in Bengal. Insofar as the Bhaktas (the followers of *Bhakti*) rejected the ritual aspect of Hinduism and the exclusive position of the Brahmins, the propagation of the *Bhakti* concept began to contain a note of social protest.

From the sixth to the tenth century in the coastal regions, for the most part in the ports, it was Jainism that became the mass religion. The most famous of all the Jaina temples was that at Aihole (Aivalle) built in the seventh century. In the Middle Ages a large number of other temples and statues were built. The Jains enjoyed special influence among the Tamil population. However between the sixth and eighth centuries the Bhaktas waged a fierce struggle against Jainism and the latter began to yield its ground to Hinduism. By the fifteenth century Jainism had only succeeded in retaining some influence in Gujarat, although small Jaina communities, for the most part those of the merchants and moneylenders, remained in many Indian towns.

Despite the fact that the philosophical thought of India was closely bound up with religious concepts, in the Middle Ages it began to develop as a separate field of knowledge in its own right.

It was in that period that the six classical systems of Indian philosophy described earlier in this volume took definitive shape: Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. These systems were regarded as orthodox insofar as they accepted the authority of the *Vedas*, and each of them made its own particular contribution to man's knowledge of the world and the laws of thought, although the ideas were presented in a religious cum mystical form. Apart from these official systems, there were also the Buddhist philosophical schools of the Madhyamikas and Vijnyanavadas, who rejected the reality of the world and of knowledge, and who also did not accept God himself as the creator of the world. The Madhyamika school asserted: "If God has no beginning then he himself does not exist." All they recognised as real was pure consciousness, viewed as cosmic essence. On the other hand the Charvaka sect spread a materialist teaching rejecting the existence of the soul, insofar as it is impossible to prove it exists independently of the body. For the same reason the Charvakas also rejected the existence of an absolute soul or God.

From the late eighth and the early ninth century onwards the Advaita-Vedanta school founded by Shankara (788-820) became ever more popular. This school spoke out in favour of reviving the ancient teaching of the *Upanishads*, declaring that God should be accepted as the sole reality while the world should be viewed as no more than an illusion, in which only those not endowed with knowledge believe.

The aim of "enlightened" men should be to set themselves free from illusion and be aware of their oneness with Brahman (with God). Shankara was not only a philosopher but also a religious reformer, striving to strip Hinduism of latter-day additions detracting from its original purity. He built four monasteries and introduced reform in the community of *sanyasi* ascetics.

However in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries Shankara's ideas, comprehensible only to the "chosen few", began to lose their popularity. Ramanuja (eleventh century) simplified the concepts of the Uedanta school making them accessible to the people at large. According to his theory God created the world from matter, time and soul—three substances separate from himself. In order to comprehend God there was no need to have extensive knowledge of the sacred texts; far more important was man's love for God which alone could bring him to a true understanding of God. Love for and devotion to God were not affected by the caste of the believer. In the teaching of Ramanuja God is presented not as an indifferent creator of the world, but as a creator interested in the destiny of each individual; he responds to man's prayers and can bring about changes in man's destiny. The philosophy of Ramanuja constituted the fundamental belief for many Vedanta sects.

In medieval India scientific knowledge made major advances basing itself on the foundations laid in ancient times. Spectacular success was achieved in the spheres of mathematics, astronomy and medicine, linked with the practical experience of men engaged in agriculture, construction work and healing.

In the period from the sixth to the thirteenth century literature in the local languages developed in most parts of India, although many poets were still writing in the "high" language, namely Sanskrit. Sanskrit literature was gradually becoming *recherché* and aimed mostly at court circles. A vivid example is provided by the *Ramacharita* written by Sandhyakara Nanda, a poet living at the court of the Bengali ruler, Ramapala (1077-1119). Each line of this poem has a double meaning and can be taken as relating to the epic hero Rama or the king Ramapala, and it thus equates the deeds of the poet's patron with the exploits of the epic hero. Particularly popular was the *Gita Govinda*, written in the twelfth century by the Bengali poet Jayadeva, and describing the love of Krishna for Radha, which symbolises the striving of the human soul to God. The subtle psychological detail and the vivid imagery of this poem were to exert an important influence on the development of poetry in almost all new Indian languages, and the mystical interpretation of sexual attraction later became widespread in *Bhakti* poetry.

The development of literature in the local languages found expression not only in the rendering of epic works from the Sanskrit, for example that of the *Ramayana* into Telugu by Buddha Reddi in the thirteenth century, but original literature gained ground as well.

Although it was mainly poetry that made significant advances in the Middle Ages, there also appeared prose works in Sanskrit consisting of stories linked by a common motif. Examples of these were *Kadambari* by Bana, a tale of two lovers who had lived twice on earth in different forms, and Dandin's satirical *Tale of the Ten Princes*, which pokes fun at rulers, dignitaries, ascetics and even the very gods. Another work of this type is the picaresque novel by Haribhadra, that was written in Prakrit in the seventh-eighth centuries.

In the south of India the most developed literature was that in Tamil. The first works in this language had appeared in the early centuries A.D., but the major ones, the *Kural* (Couplets), by Tiruvalluvar and the epic poems *Shilappadigaram* (The Jewelled Anklet) and *Manimegalai*, are dated by various scholars as stemming from anything between the second and sixth centuries. In the eighth and ninth centuries *Bhakti* poetry started to gain ground; it extolled the mystical union of man with God in the allegory of the love between a youth and a girl. Hymns composed by the Alvars and the Nayanars (Vaishnavite and Shaivite proponents of *Bhakti*) distinctive for their profound lyricism spread far and wide as folk songs.

In Northern India a new genre of heroic poetry began to appear in the local language. An example of this genre is the Hindi poem by Chand Bardai (1126-1196), entitled *Prithvirajraso*, a ballad which in the tone of a panegyric describes the struggle waged by Prithviraja Chauhan against the Moslem invaders.

Architecture and sculpture were the most developed art forms during this period. Between the sixth and eighth centuries it was mainly cave temples that were built (in Ellora, Elephanta, and somewhat later, Ajanta), or rock-cut temples such as those at Mahabalipuram, or the *ratha* (a temple built in the form of a chariot) at Konarak. This did not demand really complicated techniques: it was easier to hollow out buildings in the rock than to cut stones, transport them over long distances, and then build up high and durable buildings. In Ajanta the cave temples belonged to the Buddhists, while in Ellora Buddhist cave shrines and Hindu and Jaina temples are all found side by side. The cave temples were decorated with bas-reliefs, sculptures or frescoes. The best known of these are the enormous bas-reliefs containing a great many figures representing "Ganga's Descent to Earth" (seventh century) at Mahabalipuram, and "Ravana Who Shakes the Mountain of Kailasa" in Ellora with Shiva and Parvati sitting on the mountain.

In the ninth century temples began to be built from hewn stone. In the north of India temples were parabolic in shape, topped by a canopy in the shape of a lotus flower, while in the south they would be in the shape of a rectangular pyramid. The rooms inside were low-ceilinged and dark; they were sanctuaries to which not everyone had access. The main mass of worshippers merely walked round the

temple on the outside. In the courtyards of these temples and also on their walls, there were sculptures depicting scenes from the epics, or providing symbolic representations of the worship of the particular god, to whom the temples were dedicated. Later on, and particularly in the south, the profusion of sculptured detail became so great that the temples themselves appeared merely as a pedestal for it: statues, high reliefs and bas-reliefs came to fill all the walls right up to the top. Because of this profusion the human eye was no longer able to apprehend the individual scenes or sculptures. Such is the case for example with regard to the temples at Khajuraho (c. 954-1050), where the bas-reliefs, mainly of erotic content, consist of illustrations to the *Kamasutra*, a treatise on the art of love, at Konarak (1234-1264), Orissa, where the temple is covered from floor to ceiling with such intricate and complex sculptural ornament, that each individual stone is like an exquisite piece of jewelry. Later there was to be a marked degeneration in this monumental sculpture. Beginning with the fourteenth century only isolated static, canonical figures were to be found; the vitality and diversity of the earlier period began to disappear. Meanwhile in Tamil regions the art of casting small bronze figures became highly developed and these retained lifelike gestures and a realistic air. One of the finest of such statuettes is "Shiva Nataraja" (The Dancing Shiva), frequent copies of which were later to be found with minor modifications over the whole of Southern India.

The frescoes, like those found in the cave temples at Ajanta, are not encountered ever since the eighth century. Virtually no other paintings of this period have survived. In the temples of Southern India the art of classical dance was sustained in conjunction with ritual ceremonies.